

EXCISE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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A-118

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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

From : Amembassy Guatemala

EO 11652: XGDS 2
TAGS: PINS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

RECEIVED
JUN 11 3 06 PM '73
P730602-0182

DATE: June 5, 1973

SUBJECT: INTERNAL SECURITY: Monthly Report of Incidents,
DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REF :
REVIEWED BY *Ray* DATE *7 OCT 1973*
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

SUMMARY: The May total of probable political nature dropped to 49, a figure which was below both the 1973 (56) and 1972 (63) monthly averages, and which reflected the relative tranquility in the country. The South Coast assaults against peasants continued, however, and unknown assailants in two raids alone kidnapped 11 peasants in Suchitepequez and Retalhuleu Departments. The Ministry of Government sacked two high-level police officials and, in a welcomed move, appointed a career police officer to the National Police's second highest position. END OF SUMMARY.

Statistics: The May total of 49 press-reported incidents of a probable political nature was below both the January-April monthly average (56) and the 1972 average (63), and reflected the relative tranquility in the country. Statistics included 25 assassinations and 16 kidnappings. Victims this month were 19 agricultural workers, a ranch owner and his son, a labor leader, a military commissioner, and an agronomist. Terrorist May 1 Labor Day propaganda activities accounted for 4 (8%) of the month's incidents; the Government security forces may have been involved in at least 4 more [redacted] The remainder (84%) were [redacted] not readily attributable.

South Coast: The South Coast led geographic areas in violence for the 11th straight month with 50% of the overall incident count. According to the press, unidentified bands of men kidnapped a number of peasants, including seven

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DECLASSIFIED

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from a Suchitepequez village on May 2 and four from a Retalhuleu Department on May 21, three of whom were later found shot to death. In addition, assailants with automatic weapons ambushed and killed Retalhuleu rancher Virgilio Lavicot and his son on May 28.

Quezaltenango. Military Zone Commander David Cancinos has taken over the Army's counterguerrilla exercise "Tiger" (see DAO's IR 6 838 0041 73 of May 21, 1973), which is now planned as a series of sweep operations aimed at criminals as well as subversives and is planned for a three- to four-month period. The army is reportedly particularly disgruntled over the assaults against ranchers and is urging local landowners to hire more mobile military policemen (PMA's) for protection.

Comment: The South Coast's anti-guerrilla exercise is quite different from the early 1972 El Peten exercise in which then Poptun Military Zone Commander Cancinos effectively rooted out a subversive movement. The South Coast environment with its large population, much easier access roads, numerous local hideouts, and many more targets of opportunity is much more conducive to criminal and guerrilla activities than the Peten. As a consequence, the Army's now almost one-year-old sweep operations have not had any important impact on the area's lawlessness.

Change in Police Personnel: In an abrupt move on May 6, the Ministry of Government removed without comment Army Lt. Col. Victor Manuel Abadia del Cid as 2nd Chief of the Treasury Police and Army Lt. Col. Jorge Mario Morales Díaz as 2nd Chief of the National Police, transferring the latter to the San Jose (Esquintla) Army Base. Morales was replaced by Héctor René Rivera Méndez, formerly the Director of the Police Academy and a career police official.

Comment: Whatever the motive for the change (See Guatemala A-102), it is welcomed, as the National Police's second-ranking official, for the first time in years, is now a career officer.

Attachment *WAB*
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BOWDLER

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EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5B (2)

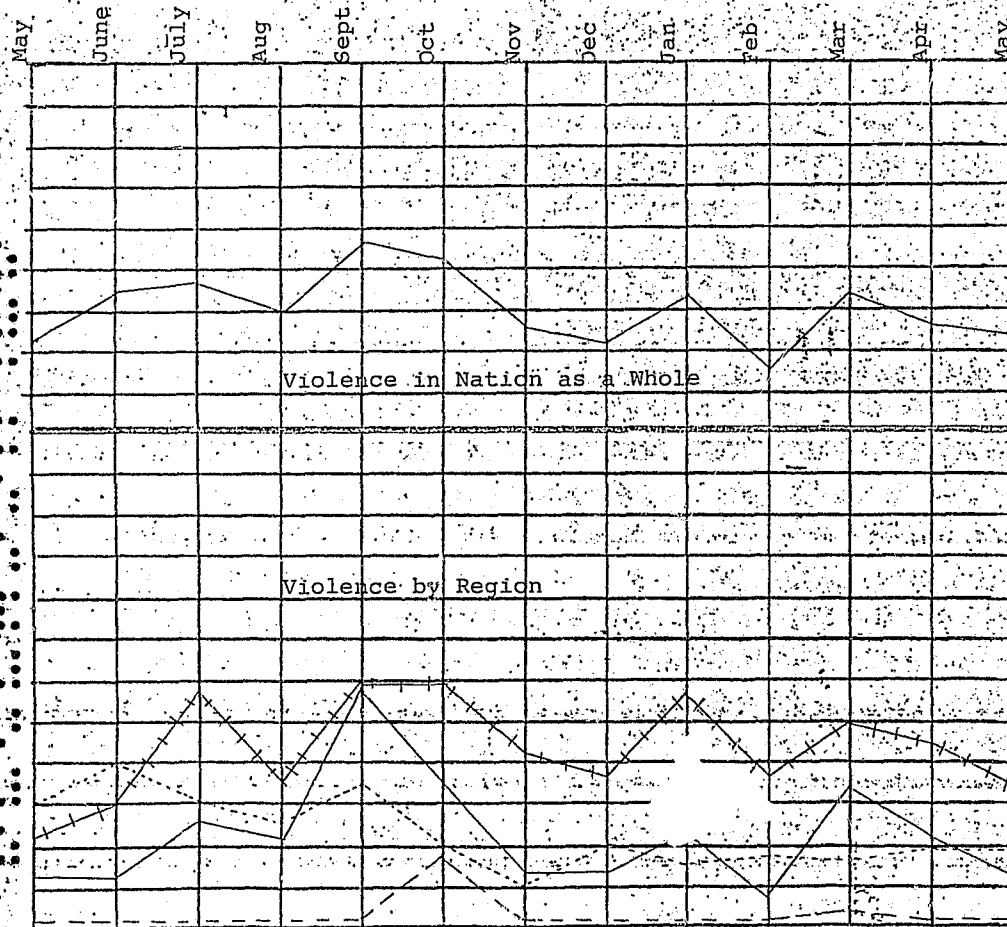
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Guatemala A-419
ENCLOSURE

ARA

MONTHLY FREQUENCY OF POLITICAL INCIDENTS BY REGION - MAY 1972 - MAY 1973



TOTAL 49

For purposes of this graph, acts of violence include shootings, bombings, and deaths, all of which appear to be politically motivated.

Capital area - Sacatepequez, Guatemala

South Coast - San Marcos, Quezaltenango, Retalhuleu, Suchitepequez, Escuintla, Santa Rosa.

Eastern Region - Jutiapa, El Progreso, Jalapa, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Izabal, El Peten.

Highlands - Totonicapan, Chimaltenango, Huehuetenango, El Quiché, Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz.